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BSTRACT

This guidebook provides a systematic approach to valuating student newspapers in five major areas: coverage and ontent, writing and editing, editorial leadership and opinion eatures, physical appearance and visual communication, and hotography, art, and use of graphics. Each of the major areas is ivided into numerous sub-categories; for each sub-category, the uidebook lists elements that are desirable in a student newspaper. he publication provides an explanation of the way the guidelines are sed by judges from the National Scholastic Press Association and the ssociated Collegiate Press in scoring individual newspapers, and it ncludes a bibliography of publications of interest to student ewspaper advisers and staffs. (GW)

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NSPA/ACP
Newspaper Guidebook

National Scholastic Press Association
Associated Collegiate Press

CS 203 830

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Contents

The Critical Service 3
Coverage and Content
Scope of Sources 5
Balance Among Sources 6
Timeliness and Vitality of Content 7
Sports Coverage 8
Writing and Editing
Range of Story Types 10
Straight News Stories 11
Feature Stories 13
Sports Stories 15
Copyediting 16
Headline Writing 17
Editorial Leadership and Opinion Features
Range of Opinion Content 19
Range of Leadership Topics in Editorials and Opinion Features 20
Editorial Writing 21
Opinion Feature Writing 22
Editorial Cartoons 23
Physical Appearance and Visual Communication
Overal Physical Personality, Appearance and Design Plan 24
Headline Schedule 26
Body Typography 27
Printing 28
Front Page Makeup 28
Inside News Pages 29
Editorial and Opinion Pages 30
Sports Pages 31
Advertising 31
Photography, Art and Use of Graphics
Scope of Photo Use 33
Photo Content 34
Technical Quality 34
Cutlines 35
Use of Art and Graphics 35
Student Work 36
Marks of Distinction 37
Judge's Summary Comments 38
Bibliography 38

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Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414.

Foreword

Since 1921, NSPA and ACP have offered student staffs incisive and helpful evaluations of their publications through our newspaper critical service. Success of this service has been rooted in the creation of intelligent, functional and flexible critical service guidebooks. This latest revision follows the tradition of excellence established by its predecessors.

In this guidebook, emphasis is rightfully placed on adherence to sound journalistic practices in the areas of writing, editing, photography, coverage, appearance and service to the school community. The guidebook also accommodates the initiative, creativity and responsible leadership that are the marks of exceptional publications.

Basic ideas set forth by Fred and Lucille Kildow in the early NSPA/ACP guidebooks have proved timeless. All subsequent guidebook revisions have been made with their original concepts in mind. In the late 1940's Glenn Hanson and Otto Quale updated the content to reflect changes in student newspaper publishing that were part of the post-World War II era. Skip and Kathy Leabo were responsible for revisions in the early 1960's. In 1969, Wayne Brasler of the University of Chicago High School, and his former editor, Dick Dworkin, completed a major rewrite of the guidebook.

Brasler, a journalism instructor and publication adviser, is the primary author of this guidebook too. His revision accounts for changes that have occurred in the student press since publication of the 1969 edition and represents a return to a more simplified approach to evaluation. Brasler's work was thoroughly reviewed by Mary Skar, director of the critical service, Wally Wikoff, NSPA/ACP consultant, Judy Schell, editor of **Scholastic Editor** and several newspaper judges and educators. Final editing is my work. Jon Kavanaugh of NSPA/ACP is responsible for design and production.

Each of these people, and the many others who offered ideas, suggestions and support have our sincere gratitude.

Jeanne Buckeye
Executive Director

The Critical Service

NSPA and ACP critical services offer student newspaper staffs an outside, authoritative opinion of their publications; suggestions on how to improve them; a measurement of how their product compares with those being published in similar situations; and recognition of their efforts through honor ratings.

This Guidebook (which is a guide for evaluation, not a textbook) reflects primarily what the top publications are doing now. It is these publications, not NSPA or ACP, which set the standards. What the top publications are doing, of course, incorporates the fundamentals of sound journalism and journalism excellence. And what they are doing reflects the principles of judging that NSPA and ACP have employed from their beginnings more than a half century ago.

The NSPA and ACP programs have evolved into a reciprocal process by which the critical services help publications to improve and the publications, in return, raise the standards of the critical service.

Though NSPA and ACP have always required publications to meet certain basic requirements to earn honors, they have never required, nor encouraged, standardization. Judges reward initiative and innovation, within the bounds of sound journalism, with bonus scores, beyond those printed in the scorebook. In recent years this philosophy has been extended through the institution of **Marks of Distinction.**

As member publications have improved and innovated through the years, they have raised the standards for top ratings, a redefinition requiring frequent revision of this Guidebook.

Judging

This Guidebook is divided into five sections: Coverage and Content; Writing and Editing; Editorial Leadership and Opinion Features; Physical Appearance and Visual Communication; and Photography, Art and Use of Graphics. These sections additionally are broken into subsections.

Included in each subsection are statements representing essentials for student newspapers in that area. The judge underlines statements representing areas in which a publication shows weaknesses, citing examples of those weaknesses, usually by story, issue and page, such as, "Library, p. 3, Sept. 24." While these references indicate types of weaknesses, they are not necessarily the only examples found.

In the space provided for judges' comments about a publication, the judge may further detail the weaknesses cited, comment on strengths the paper evidences or note areas in which the paper shows both strengths and weaknesses. The judge may also note an isolated example of a weakness, without underlining the related statement.

Scoring

After critiquing the paper in each subsection, the judge decides the score according to what other publications in the paper's classification are doing, not in comparison with some imaginary, ideal newspaper. Papers are classified by size of school enrollment, frequency of publication and printing process. Scores vary from classification to classification for comparable work. A paper's score cannot be compared to scores received by papers in other classifications or even be compared from year to year. Only the final ratings of newspapers in the same classification and the same year can be compared.

The point scale in each subsection runs from "weak" to "excellent." A judge, however, can score below "weak" for areas of serious weakness. The judge may also score above "excellent" for areas of outstanding strength, especially areas in which a publication reflects initiative or innovation, within the bounds of sound journalism and with successful results.

After the judge has scored a paper, he or she adds up the subsection points. Maximum possible points, except for bonus scores above "excellent," are 900 in each section, or 4,500 for the entire scorebook. Publications can also earn up to 50 bonus points for excellence in advertising, and up to 300 as credit for student work as recorded on the entry blank.

In the process of scoring a paper, the judge may make adjustments to its classification requiring erasures of scores, comments or both. Such erasures are common and do not indicate any problem with judging the paper.

Ratings

The ratings determined by a paper's total points are: First Class, which represents "very good to excellent;" Second Class, "good to very good;" Third Class, "fair to good;" or Fourth Class, "weak to fair." First Class publications are eligible to receive NSPA's or ACP's All American or "superior" rating.

In addition to numerical scores, judges may recognize publications for imaginative,

lively, appealing or effectively independent achievement in any of the Guidebook's five main sections. Such recognition is recorded as a Mark of Distinction at the end of a section and supported by statements near the end of the Guidebook.

To receive an All American rating, a publication must first earn the highest numerical score for a First Class rating, or 4,500 points. It must then receive at least four of five possible Marks of Distinction. In this way, NSPA and ACP can recognize those publications which exhibit special intelligence, creativity and appeal, as well as basic journalistic excellence. They can also recognize special achievement in specific areas, even when a publication, overall, does not rate near the top, since any publication, not just those rated First Class, may receive Marks of Distinction.

A publication's rating reflects what the judge found in the finished product. Yet judges want to know about the problems the staff encountered in publishing the newspaper, and about those situations in the school or community which were beneficial or detrimental to the staff's efforts.

With such information, the judge can suggest ways for the staff to avoid or solve specific problems in the future. However, beyond being sympathetic or giving attention to specific problems, a publication must be judged as it appeared. It is the finished product that readers see, not the hoped for product. NSPA and ACP can only rate the publication, not the staff's intentions.

The Student's Role

Student publications should, as much as feasible, be the work of students. NSPA and ACP encourage advisers to take an activist, teaching role in student publications, critiquing (but not "censoring") student work before it is published, challenging student ideas and decisions, giving advice. But students should make the final decisions.

No topic should be forbidden to the student press and no expression of opinion restricted from publication. Exceptions are when what is to be printed would be illegal under the law, such as libel, certain obscenities in certain situations, or matter which would be likely to cause immediate and substantial disruption to the school.

Even when the problem of content arises, it is the student journalist who should find a solution, not the adviser. Having that responsibility, student journalists also have the obligation to be knowledgeable about press law.

Student journalists are also obliged to consider community standards and sensibilities in handling topics which may upset or offend readers. Almost any topic, no matter how controversial, can be handled in the student press defensibly if it is approached with taste, tact, common sense and, above all, fairness and accuracy.

Student editors should not permit errors of fact or poor quality reporting, writing or editing to be printed in their publications under the guise of learning by errors. Student journalists do learn by error; but such errors should be **found** and **corrected** before they reach the publication stage.

In Conclusion

NSPA and ACP judges are qualified professional journalists and past and present advisers who can give authoritative critiques of publications. At least two people—the judge and a supervisor who sees all entries in the critical service—see each paper before the rating is finally assigned. A paper's rating is likely to be carefully considered, well-substantiated and accurate. But if a staff feels an injustice or error has been made, it may return the Guidebook with a statement specifying where they believe an error exists and where re-evaluation should be made.

The few requests received each year from the thousands of publications evaluated in the critical services indicate the judges are doing a sound job.

In considering your rating, remember that NSPA and ACP have not set the standards; the papers have. As the best publications achieve new levels of excellence and improved content and presentation, what constitutes an All American newspaper correspondingly changes. And with it, the other honor ratings also change. The All American paper of a decade ago might not make First Class today.

This program is both gratifying and challenging. Alert and enterprising staffs not only meet NSPA/ACP standards, but push them higher.

SNEWSNEWSNEV
WSNEWSN
VSNEWSNEWSNI

Coverage and Content

Today's leading high school and college newspapers reflect a wide range of sources in the school and community and a wide range of subject matter. Most leading publications employ a beat report system which keeps the reporting staff in touch, at least once every two or three weeks, with every administrator, faculty member, organization and student leader as well as contacts in the community.

Using the beat system, editors can anticipate the news for previews and get reporters and photographers to upcoming events for follow-ups. Beats also provide a broad base from which to develop feature stories. Localization of national and international news, student culture, visiting personalities and staff ideas also provide sources for stories in leading publications.

Treatment of news once it is gathered varies among publications. Most leading high school papers have grown beyond merely imitating professional dailies, which, by nature of their publishing frequency and audience, concentrate on covering the day's events. Student publications, issued less frequently for a more specialized audience, are likely to specialize their content, focusing on upcoming events, getting fresh angles (what the reader doesn't already know), on past events, developing pieces on people in the news, going in-depth on developments and issues.

Even daily college and university publications tend more toward features than their professional counterparts because of their more homogeneous audience.

However they may individually treat the news, all leading student newspapers reflect a careful balance among sources, creative development of the news, timeliness, vitality and wide range of story types.

Scope of Sources

Sources include:
students, including
minority groups
or the range of student types,
officers,
award winners,
sports personalities,
those involved in newsworthy activities
in school and out of school;

faculty members;
administrators;
nonteaching staff members
(such as special services personnel,
custodians, engineers,
cafeteria personnel,
residence hall personnel);
security;
guidance;
alumni
and former students;
parents and
parent organizations;

people in the community
(such as in the areas of
law enforcement,

6 drugs,
housing,
recreational facilities,
the ecology,
sex education,
men's and women's roles,
sociology,
psychology
and others);

visiting
political,
business,
educational,
religious
or entertainment
personalities;

curriculum developments
and classroom work;

student government;
organizations;
speakers;

community, state, national
or international developments
affecting the school program
or student life;

student culture, including
fads,
music,
current topics of concern.

	60	120	180	240	300		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Balance Among Sources

Individual issues
and successive issues
reflect a wide variety
of subject matter.

Balance is evidenced between
in-school news
and stories developed from out-of-school sources;
curricular and cocurricular news;
scheduled and unscheduled events;
news and feature material,
with too much column material avoided.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Timeliness and Vitality of Content

Story length
and placement
logically
reflect news values;
top space
or undeserved length
does not go to news
about which readers are likely to know;
important stories are not buried.

Coming events get
detailed reporting;
past events
are followed up with
timely angles,
reactions,
outcomes.

The "why,"
not just the "what,"
of news is developed.

Background stories
cover the people involved in events,
history behind events,
opinions concerning events
and portent for the future.

Related stories, photos and art
are packaged.

In dealing with one topic
in successive issues,
a variety of sources
is employed;
interviews and
statements from both
authoritative sources
and people reacting
to those statements
are evident.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

8 Sports Coverage

Sports page or section covers the entire
school sports program
including (as appropriate to the individual school)
boys' teams,
girls' teams,
mixed teams,
varsity teams,
junior varsity teams,
intramurals,
physical education classes,
students
and teachers
involved in out-of-school sports activities;

develops investigations of sports-related issues such as
rules and regulations,
player behavior,
fan behavior,
safety factors,
favoritism,
equipment and facilities,
health, including drug use and its effects;

examines the quality of the physical education program,
equality of physical education programs,
spending or facilities,
for boys and girls,
favoritism in physical education classes,
grading in physical education classes
and other issues
as they are relevant;

uses photos to report sports
and supplement written reports,
not merely as an afterthought;

emphasizes coming events
(those occurring before the next issue),
including relative strength
of home team and opponent players,
injuries, grudges or improvements
that may affect game outcomes,
what home and opponent teams
have done so far in the season
against common opponents,
using reporting
and statistical research;

covers past events
(those occurring since the last issue),
with stories based on reporting
rather than opinion,
which tell not just what happened
but why,
summarize game highlights

rather than overdeveloping play-by-play accounts,
include scores;

in both previewing future games
and covering past games,
emphasizes the human side of sports
in the locker room,
on the team bus,
before and after the game,
in the stands,
and the people involved
in sports
and their emotions and observations,
including players, coaches,
officials, managers,
cheerleaders, pompon squad members;
uses feature story approaches,
including sights and sounds,
interviews,
personality sketches,
rather than overly relying
on straight news pieces;

includes a regular, signed column
reflecting both reporting
and a personal viewpoint,
variety of subjects,
variety of writing approaches.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	*Your Score

***Denotes arbitrary score,** given when content is omitted in a publication because the school does not have an extensive formal athletic program or inter-school competition. If you have indicated this fact on your entry form, or it is obvious to the judge, you will be given an arbitrary score for sports coverage commensurate with the scores your newspaper has received for other coverage.

Total score for Coverage and Content_____

☐ **Mark of Distinction**

Coverage and Content

If you have received a Mark of Distinction for Coverage and Content, see judge's comment near end of Guidebook.

10

Writing and Editing

Well-reported and well-written copy is found throughout today's leading student newspapers. Nearly all follow a policy of careful verification of fact and repeated rewriting before publication. Today's student journalists rely less on the straight news story as the only major means of communicating the news. They have added a variety of feature forms, many of them incorporating literary approaches formerly reserved for fiction. Personality studies, issue investigations, sights-and-sounds accounts and New Journalism pieces have added depth, color and new sensitivity to the scholastic press. (Publications successfully employing New Journalism pieces will receive credit for them; those that do not employ such articles will not be penalized as they represent an advanced form only experienced staffs are able to achieve.)

Range of Story Types

Straignt news (inverted pyramid) stories
previewing coming events
or covering past events;

interviews that
are informative,
express opinion
or create a personality profile;

feature pieces about
people
and their newsworthy activities,
achievements, experiences, hobbies;

stories reporting people's
opinions about timely issues;

in-depth investigations
of relevant issues;

sights-and-sounds coverage of events;

New Journalism pieces employing
the techniques of fiction writing
and other literary approaches
in a factual presentation of nonfiction news events.

Paper avoids stories
where the reporter,
without justification,
becomes the central source of attention;
stories where the source is the reporter,

including student government
or administrative columns,
when a trained reporter should be the writer.

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Straight News Stories

Leads get to most important point of the story
in opening words,
whether it be
why, what, who, how, where. when;
avoid delaying main point of story
in opening words by spotlighting
secondary element
or a time element, unless it is of prime importance,
starting with background,
beginning with reporter observation
or commentary,
an inappropriate cliche
or irrelevant comparison,
a routine question
(which leaves the writer to start story
merely by answering the question)
or a quote which is not vital to the story
or which is vague or confusing.

Leads open with
bright, interesting, colorful nouns or verbs,
reflect imagination, expertise with subject;
are brief, crisp, to the point
and in themselves effectively summarize stories;
avoid opening with dull words
such as "the," "a" or "an"
when story could open directly
on a strong noun or verb,
but avoid eliminating such articles
when they are necessary,
leaving an awkward sentence beginning.

12 Background paragraph or paragraphs
under or near lead
give the reader
information necessary
to understanding the rest of the story.

Information is logically ordered
with what is most important placed first
and what is least important placed last,
avoiding chronological order
when insignificant.

Direct quotes,
indirect quotes
and narration
are effectively interplayed.

Sources are cited for facts reported.

Time pegs
or local pegs
indicate why stories are appearing.

Stories are
as brief
and to the point
as possible,
but reporting reflects adequate inquiry,
going beyond the obvious;
stories deal with specifics
rather than generalities.

Reporting reflects impartiality,
fairness, balance,
accuracy (no inconsistencies);
stories are free of editorial commentary,
"puff," superlatives.

Style employs
third person consistently,
preference for words that are
specific, simple,
but colorful,
particularly, strong and specific
nouns and verbs,
rather than weak adjectives or adverbs;
avoids overuse of exclamation marks,
question marks, quotation marks,
italicizing or boldfacing of words.

Where wire copy
or syndicated material is used,
the source is identified.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Feature Stories

Reporting,
not reporter opinions,
nor material summarized from other publications
forms basis for features.

Feature stories reflect
carefully developed beginnings,
endings
and story construction,
with transitions
leading the reader
from one part of the story to the next;
avoid contrived angles
or presentation which keeps the reader from
getting information clearly.

Leads open
colorfully and interestingly,
with attention to reader interests.

Background paragraph or paragraphs
clearly communicate information necessary
to reader understanding of stories.

Time pegs
or local pegs
clarify why stories are appearing
when they do.

Reporting reflects adequate inquiry,
investigation
or interviewing.

Quotes add to depth or
story atmosphere,
are effectively interplayed
with narration,
with neither narration nor quotes
dominating.

Style reflects
color, simplicity,
consistency within individual stories,
individuality from story to story
appropriate to subject matter;
avoids tedious or regimented question-answer approach,
superfluous phrases such as
"when asked if."

In-depth features reflect
extensive reporting
and interviewing,
complete background,
balance among sources
and viewpoints reported,
reporter impartiality,
care in use of surveys or statistical data,

14 responsibility in eliciting conclusions
that, in applicable areas,
could lead to correction of problems,
rather than merely reporting problems.

Personality profiles reflect
time pegs or local pegs,
reporter inquiry beyond obvious or trite questions,
drawing in words a portrait of
what the subject has to say,
how he or she looks and gestures,
his or her emotional makeup, personality and attitudes,
emphasis on the subject,
rather than setting of interview
or reporter opinion;
avoid over-use of attributions such as, "(s)he said."

Sights and sounds features
are accompanied by,
or include,
adequate background material to make
what is reported understandable
and newsworthy;
introduce the reporter
and reporter's emotions
into story only when newsworthy;
reflect rich observation,
rich use of strong nouns, verbs;
are organized so they can be easily followed.

New Journalism features
reflect a base of
sound reporting;
derive facts from reporter fact-gathering
and observation
rather than personal opinion;
justify their approach
by developing depth portraits
of people, events or issues;
evidence high quality in
easily followed story organization,
balanced presentation of viewpoints,
literary techniques.

Speech and interview features
open with a major point
followed by introduction of the subject
and background;
carry a time peg or local peg;
effectively interplay
direct quotes, indirect quotes, narration;
are based on reporting
but not reporter opinion or intrusion,
except in cases where the interview process
or circumstances of the interview
themselves become newsworthy, colorful
or are an integral part of the story.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Sports Stories

Sports stories are based on
reporting of fact,
reactions of people involved,
rather than reporter opinion;
are organized logically;
do not follow chronological organization
when it places the less newsworthy
before the more newsworthy;
summarize essential facts early
when several elements are involved,
then develop details on each.

Leads reflect
latest fact,
most important point
or informed analysis;
are colorful;
avoid opening with facts
readers are likely to know already,
reporter opinion,
weak nouns, verbs or articles,
name of school, team or sport.

Background material reflects
reporter expertise with sport,
team history and circumstances;
places events in perspective
to past and future;
is complete enough to be understood
by any reader, fan or nonfan,
avoiding inside references;
gives attention to both home team
and opponent,
using names of opposing players.

Descriptions of performances
rely on specifics, detail,
but do not overdevelop play-by-play accounts
or simply tell fans what they
are likely to know already;
avoid cliches, alibis for home team losses;
do not focus on excuses for home team losses.

Writing style reflects
color, human interest values,
atmosphere and setting of events;
intelligent rather than condescending
or trite approach;
emphasizes rich vocabulary,
respect for facts,
fast pace.

Quotes are employed liberally
and those reported seem newsworthy
and from authoritative sources;
when appropriate, such as in color stories,

16 are not only from players and coaches,
but managers, officials,
fans, cheerleaders.

Personality profiles
reflect adequate inquiry,
going beyond obvious or trite questions,
have a real news or feature peg;
avoid unwarranted superlatives.

	30	60	90	120	150		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	*Your Score

***Denotes arbitrary score,** given when content is omitted in a publication because the school does not have an extensive formal athletic program or inter-school competition. If you have indicated this fact on your entry form, or it is obvious to the judge, you will be given an arbitrary score for sports stories commensurate with the scores your newspaper has received for other writing.

Copyediting **(editing of copy before it is set in type)**

Copy reflects
factual accuracy and consistency,
correct spelling,
accurate and consistent name spellings,
correct punctuation;

gives adequate background information
for people,
including first and last names,
positions or titles
and other references
including publications, organizations
or traditions
with which people are associated;

is paragraphed
for optimum reading values,
(about seven or eight lines
to a paragraph for most newspapers);

is free of unnecessary detail,
wordiness,
unnecessary articles,
trite expressions,
slang,
parenthetical expressions,
overuse of passive voice;

is accurate in word choice,
avoids words which lack specific meaning,

such as many, very, great, big, beautiful, things;

is consistent in style
for abbreviations, numerals,
months, dates, states,
punctuation,
capitalizations.

Proofreading
(correcting of copy after it is set in type,
before the publication goes to press)

has been done so that
copy is usually free
of typographical errors,
other mechanical faults.

Headlines do not go over
column edge
or appear too short.

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Headline Writing

Headlines summarize stories,
highlighting the main point,
make specific statements,
prefer active to passive voice,
prefer present to past tense.
Where used, kickers say something
other than what is in the main head
and avoid reading into the main head.

Headlines generally use subject-verb form
(although for feature headlines,
magazine title heads sometimes are used
that may lack a verb,
but offer wit, insight
or unusual interest-arousing qualities
and impart sophistication to the publication);

reflect mood of stories
or types of stories;

make sense on each line,
omit unnecessary articles,
are punctuated correctly,
separate thoughts with commas or semicolons,
are consistent in style on capitalizations
and other punctuation,
use single rather than double quote marks,
avoid overusing abbreviations
or using unfamiliar abbreviations;

18 avoid padding with extra words to fit,
omitting necessary words to fit,
overusing school name,
including dates not of prime importance,
stacking objectives (placing nouns
in front of other nouns for use as adjectives),
stacking adjectives,
making more than one reference to a single subject
(such as "Girl wins honor; senior will go
to youth legislature," referring
to the same person and same honor),
are not merely labels.

	30	60	90	120	150		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Total score for Writing and Editing _____

☐ **Mark of Distinction**

Writing and Editing

If you have received a Mark of Distinction for Writing and Editing, see judge's comment near end of Guidebook.

Editorial Leadership and Opinion Features

As editors are becoming more concerned with providing both leadership and a forum for reader opinion, leading student publications are devoting complete pages, even spreads and sections, to editorial and opinion content.

Editorials are a byproduct of the news-gathering process. Gathering facts from a variety of sources, with an impartial viewpoint, journalists are in a unique position to see a broad picture of issues and draw conclusions concerning them. Editorials in leading publications reflect both solid reporting and sound reasoning. Student editors tend to keep editorials brief. But where they require more space for thoroughness or clarity, space is provided.

Editors are giving as much attention to opinion features as to editorials. Many newspapers regularly include a signed columnist, guest columnists, opinion polls, "roving photographer" features and review of current records, films, books, plays and television programs.

Editors are also giving priority to letters from readers. Because newspapers are responsible for everything they print, including letters, student editors should be careful to read all letters before publication to avoid printing libelous material or other material forbidden by law. If letters need editing for these reasons or because they contain incorrect information, are too long or poorly written, the best policy is to work with the writers in revising for publication. Some staffs reserve the right to revise or condense letters for publication without consulting the writers. However, when those writers are easily contacted, as they are in most schools, that approach is ethically questionable.

Most leading student newspapers use editorial cartoons. Though every paper may not have a talented cartoonist every year, an adequate artist can produce effective cartoons if high standards for draftsmanship are established and the staff cooperates in formulating cartoon ideas. The most newsworthy cartoons are often those related to editorials; many leading publications illustrate their top editorial each issue with a cartoon.

Range of Opinion Content

Opinion content appears every issue,
generally is packaged on an opinion page
or pages
rather than scattered throughout the paper;
includes among issues submitted
(with every kind of content not necessarily in every issue):

editorials (statements of staff or
editorial board opinion;
they should not be signed);

columns (statements of one staff writer's opinion;
they should be signed),
which could include
satire, humor or literary work;

editorial cartoons, illustrating either editorials or
cartoonist's opinion,
student,

20 faculty
or staff opinion
on school issues
or issues of concern originating outside the school;

letters from readers
responding to what has been published in the paper
or expressing opinions
on school issues
or issues of concern originating outside the school
(absence of letters often indicate a paper
is not reaching its readers);

guest columns (statements of opinion
by nonstaff members
including students,
teachers,
administrators,
faculty,
parents,
interested people in community;
these are sometimes erroneously called guest editorials),
which could include satire, humor or literary work;

reviews
of records, books, films, plays
or television programs.

Opinion features avoid
gossip,
personal mention which might be damaging
to a person's reputation,
trivia, material of limited reader interest,
material largely summarized from other publications.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Range of Leadership Topics in Editorials and Opinion Features

Topics include:

school issues affecting or of interest to
students, faculty or the community
(these issues could include:

effectiveness of student government,
student participation in the education process,
student, faculty or administrative rights,
student, faculty or administrative relationships,
quality of curriculum, instruction

or cocurricular programs,
funding, the physical plant, services such as the cafeteria,
treatment of minority or majority groups,
equality of programs for girls and boys;

community, state, national, international
developments affecting or of interest to
students, faculty or the community
(these topics could include:
political, economic, military, health issues,
student participation in government
and political action);

sidelights of school life
or the adolescent or young adult experience,
serious or humorous;

the journalistic process,
journalists' responsibilities,
the role of the press,
process of, and problems in, publishing a newspaper
or specific issue.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Editorial Writing

Editorials seem based
on sound reporting, reasoning;
make positive, practical and realistic
suggestions for action, benefiting the general welfare;
deal with issues rather than personalities;
are thought-provoking;
often tie in with news events,
rather than appearing for no evident reason;
have a single major purpose such as explanation,
argument, criticism,
commendation or commemoration;

are kept clear, simple, direct and easy to follow;
are organized around one theme,
with strong introductions,
discussions and conclusions evident;

are free of preaching, wordiness, rhetoric,
cliches, bromides,
ornate phrases, unnecessary detail.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

22 Opinion Feature Writing

Columns are
well-constructed, with an
interest-arousing beginning,
easy-to-follow body
and satisfactory ending;
almost always include time or local pegs;
reflect individual writing styles;
reflect careful editing and rewriting
resulting in a polished piece;
have a tone that reflects subject;
achieve impact, emotional message or wit.

Opinion surveys, polls and similar features
cite a broad range of sources
among the student body and community;
make claims for significant conclusions
only when the number of people interviewed
or type of sample justifies such a conclusion;
carry time or local pegs;
integrate lead, background, narration,
quotes, indirect quotes,
into a cohesive article,
rather than merely publishing questions and answers
(except for brief "roving photographer" type features).

Reviews of the arts
reflect reader interests and age group
in choice of subjects;
are based on tangible qualities
of production, writing or art;
explain what is being reviewed in enough detail
that anyone reading the review can understand
what is being reported;
do not merely repeat what has been written elsewhere;
are more than a summary or description;
reflect writer background
and expertise with the subject
but do not pretend reviewer qualifications
obviously not present.

Reviews of school plays and other productions,
if published,
are concerned with the production as a whole
rather than being actor-centered;
take into account the amateur nature of the production
rather than treating it as a professional production;
cite tangible evidence for all conclusions;
reflect background research into script, director intent
and attendance at rehearsals;
report audience's reaction to the performance;
carry an interest-arousing lead,
effectively constructed body
and satisfactory conclusion
resulting in an attractive and meaningful article,
reflecting a significant angle
and not merely passing judgement.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Editorial Cartoons

Cartoons reflect
sound ideas
effectively communicated with simplicity,
without overreliance on labeling.

Quality of drawing
reflects care in preparation;
is free of smudges, erasures, sloppiness.

Screens and other devices
are used to enhance drawings.

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	*Your Score

***Indicates arbitrary score.** If your newspaper does not publish editorial cartoons, your judge will give you an arbitrary score of 40 for this subsection.

Total score for Editorial Leadership and Opinion Features_____

☐ **Mark of Distinction**

Editorial Leadership and Opinion Features

If you have received a Mark of Distinction for Editorial Leadership and Opinion Features, see judge's comment near end of Guidebook.

24

Physical Appearance and Visual Communication

Newspaper layout and typography make a newspaper readable and attractive giving it a specific personality and ongoing identity.

Layout shows readers the relative importance of news on a page, within an issue and, for regular readers, among issues. It helps readers associate related material, such as photos or art that accompany a story. It also helps identify the kind of story being presented, such as straight news or feature.

Dramatic changes in design and layout have occurred among leading high school and college newspapers in the past five years. The majority of these papers are commendably readable, integrating headlines, body type, art and photos into appealing, inviting and exciting page designs. They are moving stories across, rather than down, the page so readers are confronted with pleasing brief sections of type rather than eye-straining long stretches. They are using ample white space to keep pages open and inviting. Overall, they are keeping design simple and functional, helping readers locate and identify material and moving readers forward through each page and issue.

Typography has been improved too. More and more publications are mastering the fine art of finding functional and attractive typefaces that stand the test of repetition and reflect the personality the staff wishes for the newspaper.

The newspaper of long strips of type with rules between is on the way out. The paper using every type face the printer has to offer without regard to the relationship between design and content, or design and natural reader habits has almost disappeared.

A few staffs have experimented boldly. Some begin each issue with a magazine cover, maintaining newspaper format inside. Some have tried turning the paper sideways at the fold to create a half-sized front cover out of page one.

Headlines sometimes appear to the side or even below stories, not only above them. Rules have assumed a new design importance as a way to set off stories in boxes. Sometimes rules are snapped around their headlines to create a side head partway in the box and partway out.

A few publications are using special type faces for important feature stories, presenting them as they might look in a magazine.

Not all the experimentation has been successful. Some of it has resulted simply from a staff desire to do something different.

Decisions on newspaper design should be based on what is known about reader habits and type faces and on what is known about making a paper readable, usable and appealing. Basing design decisions simply on an interest in trying something new or sustaining what has been done before, makes no sense.

Overall Physical Personality, Appearance and Design Plan

Layout reflects content.
News stories, feature stories,
specialized content
are visually identifiable
because of placement,

headline style,
body type width
or other design factors.

Every story is headlined,
every photo not accompanying a story is headlined
(such headlines are called captions
and should not be confused with cutlines).

Story placement and length
reflect news values;
what is more important
and less important
is evident from design.

Layout patterns serve
normal reader patterns,
from left to right,
top to bottom,
with stories starting to the right of their heads
or below them;
do not force readers to jump over photos
to get from head to story;
do not separate associated photos or art and stories;
avoid bumping heads;
avoid jumping stories inside frequently
or, worse, from back to front of an issue.

Order of pages logically departmentalizes content;
interest is maintained
throughout individual issues,
with each page
built around a focal point
story or photo.

A front page or cover nameplate
contains name of paper
in readable lettering
and word order
in a type face that blends with headline faces
or effectively contrasts with them;
is large enough or different enough
to stand out from headlines on page,
but not too large;
avoids poor quality handlettering
or garish art.

A running headline in or under the nameplate
includes volume and issue numbers,
day of week, date,
name of school, city, state
and, if there is room,
address and zip code.

26 An editorial page masthead
includes name of school,
address, city, state, zip code,
frequency of publication,
publisher of the newspaper,
subscription rates,
and lists the staff and adviser
when space permits;
is set economically, preferably one column wide,
in small type face,
paragraph style,
with leaders (dots between position and name)
eliminated when possible;
positions precede names.

Folios on inside pages
include page number,
name of paper, date,
are attractively designed
and positioned,
preferably on the outside of the page
to facilitate jumped stories,
and preferably eliminating
distracting rule across
entire top of page.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Headline Schedule

Headline faces are readable,
blend to give paper
a consistent headline personality,
avoiding hard-to-read all-caps
or faces which are too ornate, heavy,
light, condensed, extended.

Headlines are effectively
varied in size
from large to small.

Roman and italic,
bold and light
or other variations are used
to achieve contrast and variety.

Kickers are used
to set off feature heads
and to identify regular features,
with a new active head appearing
below the kicker each issue.

Kickers are about one-half the point size of main heads,
about one-third the width,
in italic if main head is roman,
in roman if main head is italic,
are set flush left, with main head indented from left,
are underlined
unless kicker face is heavy enough to stand alone;
nonfunctional forms such as
flush right kickers
or double kickers are avoided.

If use is made of special head faces for special features,
they are appropriate to content;
if use is made of special head forms
such as magazine titles,
heads between rules,
break-box heads,
or breaker heads within stories,
they are attractive in result.

Headline schedule is based on the premise
that people read from left to right,
top to bottom,
making only occasional use
of headlines on their sides
and avoiding stacked heads
(letters on top of one another).

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Body Typography

Basic body type is readable,
in appropriate size (8 to10 pt.)
with appropriate leading (1 or 2 points)
set in functional widths (for most papers 11 to 17 picas).

Small type, such as 6 pt.,
is employed for long lists.

Long vertical stretches of body type
are relieved by contrast devices
such as boldfaced cap
or cap-and-lower-case lead-ins
or subheads;
gaps are avoided within paragraphs;
overly large spaces are avoided between paragraphs.

Bylines, photocredits, continued lines
and other special matter
are set off with boldface or other devices
and reflect a regular pattern.

28 Cutlines are easily identified as being separate from story matter.

If more than one face is used, faces harmonize.

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Printing

Reproduction is clear and sharp, neither too light nor too dark.

Impression and ink distribution are uniform throughout paper.

Spacing in and around headlines and other elements is reasonably uniform.

Headlines, body type, photos and art follow straight lines when intended.

Margins are uniform, paper is neatly folded and trimmed.

Color work evidences care in achieving alignment.

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Front Page Makeup

(If your publication regularly employs a photo or art cover on the front, the first news page immediately following the cover will be judged in this category.)

Makeup reflects the most important and best content in issues
plus a variety of subject matter and story types;
spotlights coming events,
new developments, features,
rather than followups or routine news;

is bright, newsy, inviting,
varies from issue to issue,
reflecting content;

evidences a focal point,
is built around a major item or items;

maintains effective display
both above and below fold,
effectively graduating headline sizes
and attractively employing photos, art,
boxes, rules, screens and other devices.

If nameplate is floated,
used in different sizes or widths,
it is kept in the top half of the page,
preferabiy the upper third.

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Inside News Pages

Each page reflects a focal point, a major item.

Heads reflect adequate gradation
from large to small.

Editorial content and advertising are clearly separated.

At least one photo or piece of art
appears on most pages.

When advertising content permits,
effective display is achieved
both above and below fold.

Special features,
such as in-depth packages,
are approached in special ways,
with distinctive design.

Boxes, rules, screens and other devices
are used to liven makeup.

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

30 Editorial and Opinion Pages

(Scoring in this section will make allowances for four-page newspapers which must combine opinion and feature content on one page.)

The editorial page, pages or section
appears in generally the same place
from issue to issue
so readers can easily separate
news and opinion content in the newspaper.

Through either
different column widths from the rest of the paper,
general layout approach,
identifying labels in kickers or insert heads
or, in larger papers, section heads,
editorial page, pages or section
can be easily identified as opinion content.

Makeup varies from issue to issue,
maintaining a stimulating format
that reflects content
more than formula;

clearly identifies type of content—
editorials (staff opinion),
columns (individual opinion),
letters—
in kickers or insert heads,
but gives each item a fresh active headline every issue,
rather than merely labeling;

effectively graduates headlines sizes
from large to small;
maintains interest both above and below the fold;
uses editorial cartoons
and photos attractively;
adequately identifies commercial or syndicated
material such as columns, cartoons;

eliminates advertising
when possible
so advertisers are not linked
with editorial positions.

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Sports Pages

Sports news generally is packaged
on sports pages rather
than scattered throughout the paper.

Makeup is lively, but not overdone;
reflects a focal point on each page;
effectively graduates head sizes large to small;
when advertising content permits,
achieves effective display
both above and below the fold;

employs action photos in which
players' faces and movements
can be clearly seen,
preferably taken at games;
avoids player lineup shots;
uses cartoons and other art;

gives display preference
to previews, featurized followups and feature stories
over simple reporting of past events.

	20	40	60	80	100		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Advertising

Local conditions concerning advertising in student publications vary widely and many student newspapers are not allowed to carry advertising. Therefore, advertising is not critiqued as a standard part of the Newspaper Guidebook. Judges may, however, give up to 50 bonus points for newspapers which evidence outstanding advertising according to the following criteria:

Advertisements are built around
active sales messages,
whenever possible tying in
with school and community events,
holidays and the student experience;

sell products rather than businesses,
except in the case of institutional ads
for businesses which cannot sell services,
such as doctors and lawyers;

32 use student models
(Note: always get written permission from parents or students
for participation in ads;
in some states, members of interscholastic teams
may not appear in ads.);

are dummied throughout the paper
rather than on isolated pages,
but not on the editorial page;
are displayed at the bottoms of pages,
attractively pyramided to the left or right or both sides
or squared off;
are not placed next to stories which detract from the ad
(such as an ad for automobiles
next to a story about an auto accident),
or next to photos diminishing
effectiveness of both.

Bonus points for ads: +10 +20 +30 +40 +50

Your bonus points, if any _____

Total score for Physical Appearance and Visual Communication _____

☐ **Mark of Distinction**

Physical Appearance and Visual Communication

If you have received a Mark of Distinction for Physical Appearance and Visual Communication, see judge's comment near end of Guidebook.

Photography, Art and Use of Graphics

The age of photojournalism clearly has arrived in the student press. Whereas editors once hesitated to include many photos in their newspapers because of the expense, or felt they should not occupy space which could go to type, today editors of leading publications give photos equal status with type, sometimes preference, in deciding what will be published. The emergence of offset printing (which made publishing photos much less expensive than it had been with letterpress), the dominating influence of television, and the renewed interest in photojournalism at the high school and college levels have all contributed to this new concern with communicating the news through photos as well as words.

Editors seem to be giving more attention to cutlines. They consider them an integral part of the message photos deliver and deserving of close attention.

Visual expression also has taken an upswing with the introduction of more art and graphics into student publications. Using type, layout, photos and art in combination, editors are making nonverbal statements on their pages that heighten reader feeling for what is being reported while adding an element of wit and sophistication to publications.

Scope of Photo Use

Photos are used
to preview coming events;
to follow up past events;
to picture people in the news,
and identify people in stories, as with mug shots;
to illustrate feature stories,

in panels as photo stories or to illustrate stories,
in groups as photo stories
or as photo pages;
to illustrate editorials, as in photo-editorials;
to create moods;

to show the work of student photographers in the school
as on art or literary pages
with credit lines frequently included.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

34 Photo Content

Photos center on individuals
and face sizes are large enough to be recognizable;

reflect care in planning
and composition
in photos previewing coming events,
on-the-spot photos following up past events
and other photos;

reflect variety in approach;
develop human interest
inherent in subjects,
including facial expressions
and body movements;

create moods
through composition, lighting,
other factors;

avoid too many crowd shots,
lineups of groups,
especially in unimaginative
or inappropriate settings or poses,
or, generally, photos of more than three or four people.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Technical Quality

Photos are reasonably clear and sharp,
of sufficient, but not excessive contrast,
free of smears, specks and scratches,
not too dark,
too light
or both;

are cropped to focus on essentials
and to eliminate extraneous areas
such as background,
people not central to the action
or areas above heads or below waists;

are sometimes cropped using
dramatic horizontals or vertical
to heighten effect of content;

are not cropped too tightly,
awkwardly or unsuitably with
the sole purpose of making them fit a layout.

	40	80	120	160	200		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Cutlines

Cutlines describe who is in photos,
what is happening that is not obvious,
give enough background
to logically answer reader questions;

identify people from left,
by rows if necessary,
specifying top and bottom row;

use colorful opening words
and maintain a lively, bright pace throughout
with descriptive nouns and action verbs;

avoid opening with -ing words too often
or weak phrases such as
"pictured above" or "shown here"
or stating the obvious, such as "looking on," "smiling."

	30	60	90	120	150		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Use of Art and Graphics

Cartoons or other art
is occasionally used to develop or illustrate
issues in the news.

Credit is given for original artwork
when it is a major element such as full cover art.

Graphic statements are made
utilizing type faces,
special headline arrangements,
illustrations,

36 reverses, surprints or other devices, or through layout;

are not overused,
do not make paper harder to read because of poor type selection or arrangements,
poor use of reverses, surprints or other devices, obscuring type, photos or art.

	30	60	90	120	150		
Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Your Score

Total score for Photography, Art and Use of Graphics_____

☐ **Mark of Distinction**

Photography, Art and Use of Graphics

If you have received a Mark of Distinction for Photography, Art and Use of Graphics, see judge's comment near end of Guidebook.

Student Work

To compensate staffs for their efforts in planning and producing their own newspaper in competition with those who receive considerable outside assistance, a bonus score is given below. The success of this bonus plan depends upon the cooperation and honesty of those who make the report on which the score is based. Total student work percentage for copywriting, proofreading, headline writing, makeup, composition and presswork taken from the figures given on your entry blank is _____%. Amount of bonus points given is half that percentage. Judges will round out figures; for example, a score of 81 will be 80, a score of 134 will be 135.

_____

Bonus points for student work

Marks of Distinction

- ☐ Coverage and Content
- ☐ Writing and Editing
- ☐ Editorial Leadership and Opinion Features
- ☐ Physical Appearance and Visual Communication
- ☐ Photography, Art and Use of Graphics

38 Judge's Summary Comments

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Editor & Publisher: the Fourth Estate, 850 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022. Professional magazine.
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Scholastic Editor, official magazine of the National Scholastic Press Association and the Associated Collegiate Press. Published monthly September-May, combined Dec./Jan. issues. Address: Suite 205, 720 Washington Ave. S.E., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn. 55414.
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